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Article · January 2016

DOI: 10.14662/IJELC2015.091

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## Review

# Don DeLillo's *White Noise*: An Initial Postmodern Society Struggling with Fledgling Policies of Consumerism

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Accepted 15 November 2015

The impact of technology and science could be felt extensively in the present postmodern era and even more tangibly in the American society. The notion of consumerism was strongly propagated in the postmodern families which was a mere slave of technology and its omnivorous progeny, consumerism. Such notions were specifically noticeable in American history which was in fact a history of consumerism. Donald Richard De Lillo (1936) was a postmodern author who paid a comprehensive attention to this issue of technology and consumerism in his novel, *White Noise*. The plot depicted a family that was unintentionally entangled in the ruling of technology and consumerism. This paper, aimed to explore Don DeLillo's *White Noise* through the Jean Baudrillard's theories in some of his most important books regarding the issue of consumerism and its resultant social phenomena in an incipient postmodern period when the norms and policies of consumerism were not fully adopted by the inhabitants. In the novel, Don DeLillo also portrayed how forces like the nominal character of people, death, economics, gender roles and greed for money were combined with the role and dominance of technology and consumerism to form the sociology of a postmodern family. Also, the primary determinant that was technology, was explored in its relation to the other factors. Due to the candidness of most of his futuristic novels, Don DeLillo's views showed little optimism for success within his fictional postmodern world.

**Key Words:** Consumerism, Jean Baudrillard, Media, Postmodernism, Sociology, *White Noise*

**Cite This Article As:** Najjarzadeha MS (2015). Don De Lillo's *White Noise*: An Initial Postmodern Society Struggling with Fledgling Policies of Consumerism. *Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult.* 3(11): 269-276

## INTRODUCTION

Considering the social-economical phenomenon and ubiquitous ideology of Consumerism, we are lead to a colossal world where possession of goods is essential and encouraged by its members. The integral factor that designates consumerism is its emphasis upon consuming

in excess of the rudimentary needs and possession of luxurious properties in a way that approximate it to a lavish lifestyle (Watson, 2005, p. 23). What has been undergone since the advent of middle-class and revolutionized the life of people over years, has its origins

in social transformations of 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The rise of the middle-class at the end of 20th century was concomitant to the stream of globalization which initiated the ideology of consumerism, officially. The considerable movements through the 20th century, especially after the Second World War are Post-Fordism and post-modernism that vehemently precipitated the pervasiveness of consumption and blighted it as necessity (Watson, 2005, p.30). They contributed a lot to the ideology of consumerism in a way that we can assume postmodernism and consumerism as somehow interlocked issues.

One of the early figures whose inflammatory manifestos about economy and threat of capitalism influenced almost every nation's policy was Karl Marx (1818-1883). In the first chapter of *Das Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, one could find felicitous allusions to the discourse of consumerism. Through relating product as the undeniable element in consumerism, it could be utilized in the construction of consumerism's skeleton as a modern phenomenon (Marx, 2011, p.59). "Commodity is, in the first place, an object outside us, a thing that by its properties satisfies human wants of some sort or another. The nature of such wants whether springs from the stomach or fancy makes no difference" (Marx, 2011, p. 71). Another famous theorist contributed a lot to the discussion of consumerism and its role in the postmodern world especially America is Jean Baudrillard (1929 – 2007). Baudrillard exemplifies the immersion of humans into the abyss of consumerism "just as the wolf-child became a wolf by living among wolves" (2012, 56). He maintained that consumerism as an offspring of modernity was created and nurtured by man's hands and comes back to encircle and threaten him like the Frankenstein. Baudrillard believes the profusion is not dominated by natural rules and regulations but is influenced by the law of exchange-value. According to him, the piling high of products, display of cooked meats and all the alluring packages that stimulate and cause salivation, also divulge a concealed fact that needs a critical view. As he maintained, "The manifest presence of surplus, the magical, definitive negation of scarcity... in the land of Cockaigne, our markets, major shopping thoroughfares, and superstores mimic a new-found nature of prodigious fecundity" (Baudrillard, 2011, p.64).

### **Theorizing Jean Baudrillard's concept of Consumerism**

The affluence of goods has led the direction of post-industrial societies to an ambiance surrounded by objects. This profusion has brought about a revolution in the lifestyle of human beings. As far as we have shown a queer inclination toward enchanting objects, we no more spend time with other people and are enslaved by the seemingly obedient commodities. (Watson, 2005, p.39).

As a matter of fact, the affluence is regarded as the first sign of this new vogue. This profusion manifests itself in stocking of the goods and their packages. For instance, the moment we step into a department store and behold the stacking of the luxurious commodities, and our desire is stimulated to possess them all. This department signifies the land of Canaan in our mind, when we buy a part of this land, we possess a broad range of commodities that can be the image of an incalculable prodigality. Prodigality, itself is one of the definite signs of abundance and thus a consumerist society. After profusion, packages and collections play a very fundamental role. In this way, products somehow echo other goods and put each other in a chain, connected to one another. Rarely will we be confronted with an object that has been offered alone without a context that speaks them. According to Baudrillard, in a society where consumerism has a major role, a product is always considered by the shop-window, the advertisement, the manufacturer and the brand name. As we can see, one can no more refer to the use-value of a commodity. However, there is a chain of objects that imposes a coherent vision and the consumer is faced with a set of signifiers. As Baudrillard contended, these signifiers do not awaken the fever of buying but would interlock the consumer in a calculus of objects that will prepare the rise for the profusion of commodities (2000, p.27).

Baudrillard, considers objects as signs and thus the consumption of commodities as consumption of signs. These signs which their abundance prove the profusion and their consumption will lead to the consumer's happiness are, in Baudrillard's view, somehow descended to consumers like a miracle. He sketches a similarity between the rites of a primitive tribe and the way a postmodern family expects blessing with the appearance of TV's images on the screen in a post-industrial country. We know that there is a technical process behind this broadcasting of images. Seemingly, the viewer acts as a beneficiary of a miracle. Though members of that primitive tribe never confirm that if the plane does not condescend to drop any goods for them, it is not due to their performance of rites. Like that tribe, the modern man has also gathered all the sham object and is waiting for the happiness (Baurillard, 2011, 88). Baudrillard counts this comparison as simply the private and collective consumer mentality. "Consumption is governed by a form of magical thinking; daily life is governed by a mentality based on thinking, a primitive mentality, in so far as that has been defined as being based on a belief in the omnipotence of thoughts" (2011, p.94). This basis of magical thinking that in Baurillard's words presides over the concept of consumption has ossified the very logic of the alleged consumer society. The transparency of trivialized values is without any doubts the ramification of the special deference that America is paying to consumerism's policies (Baurillard, 2011, p.87).

To take a look upon the western consumer of the postmodern era, we can find them as alleged inheritors of abundance. Once this abundance is cut from its objective determinations, it can be felt as the miracle or a gift from God. This connection is somehow what we have in an African tribe when its inhabitants, believe that what white people own is their definite right and is unfairly under white people possession. They are waiting for the day that whites' magic be thwarted so they can take back their power and radiate their lives with the miracle of abundance that had been far from them. Now if we pay more attention, we can see that Western beneficiaries act in the same way as the African tribe does. They, westerners, encounter the profusion as the gift of nature for them and like how Baudrillard put it "as they are surrounded by the fantasies of the land of Cockaigne" (2011, p.53). Here we may deduce that although abundance is something trite and commonplace in western society, it continues to be felt as a miracle descended by mythological agencies. The outcome, is what we identify as technology, and progress to them as the true inheritors.

To use signs will always lead us to two functions, whether it causes conjuring them up to capture what emerges in signs or to conjuring them away to neglect them. The reason behind the consumption of images and information is to deny or conjure away the real with what we regard as signs of real. For instance, when we watch a TV program about the training of a group of soldiers to escort President for his next week visit to the city, something comes to our mind which is an immediate assassination and this distance is filled with a sign. Here, the program is intended to use the sign to conjure away the reality, or in other words, to reassure the people that no one can endanger his or her president's life. What we see here is the inversion of what was experienced in the supposition of magical abundance with the cargo cult. Indirectly, it is alluding to the fact that no matter whether it is cargo or catastrophe but what we have here is the effect of consumed vertigo (Watson, 2005, p.101). We are in the world that is shielded by the signs in the refusal of the real. The image that we consume is the representation of the tranquility that is somehow dictated by the distance from the world. This tranquility is essential as a merit that is maintained with great strain under the ultimatum and peril of a disastrous destiny. The depiction of violence in the outside world is needed not just to make the inhabitants to understand the meaning of security more deeply but to picture as something sensible at every moment.

The approach of affluence, the ownership of commodities and individual or collective facilities have been accompanied by dangerous environmental nuisances "that are a consequence, on the other hand of the very structures of consumption" (Baudrillard, 2011, p.122). First of all we can see that space that we human beings must share with each other has been degraded by

our various economic activities. We cannot deny the noise, air and water pollution, environmental destruction, the disruption of residential zones by the development of new amenities (airports, motorways) .The effects of this cultural nuisance that is the result of the mass production are undeniably inestimable but also we may acknowledge that nuisance effects of this kind have the same pace as affluence.

To consider the United States as our case study, we know that the affluence and waste are quite related to each other. In a way that we might count it as a throwaway society or garbage can sociology like how Baudrillard has put in words. We are cognizant of the fact that all moralists have criticized the lavishing of wealth. An individual who does not comply with the moral law regarding the internal use-value of commodities. His yardstick to choose or discard them is the passion of prestige and fashion or on the global scene where natural resources can be seen squandered and exploited as general wealth. Totally, the attitude we have seen prior to postmodern era toward waste equaled it with a kind of insanity which causes the life of human beings to be compromised through irrational practices. This point of view divulges the fact that we are not in an age of real abundance, and the shadow of scarcity is threatening us every minute. No matter these theoreticians are the same people who support the idea of profusion and appraise its being as something inevitable. However, this idea concerning waste as a dysfunction must be revised, and the notion of waste as a sociological phenomenon must undergo a sociological analysis to reveal its true function. There is no doubt that all the societies or individuals have surpassed the boundaries of necessity in consuming. They have somehow wasted the valuables to "feel not merely that they exist, but that they are alive" (Baudrillard, 2011, p.78). That habit may overstep the criteria of consumption and enter what we deem as the consummation to be equalized with destruction. Baudrillard mentions a ritual by a native tribe to certificate his concept in a society other than a post-industrial one : "The Kwakiutl sacrifice blankets, canoes, etched coppers, which they burn or throw into the sea to maintain their rank, to assert their value" (2011, p.80).

Thus, as it was mentioned above, the idea concerning utility has various economic and rational roots. These roots must be revised in a more general logic way in which waste is attributed to a more positive function rather than an irrational remainder. "Within this perspective, a definition of consumption as consummation - i.e. as productive waste - begins to emerge" (Baudrillard, 2011, p.44).

A critical theme of the postmodern culture is the substitution of biographies of heroes of production with biographies of heroes of consumption (Watson, 2005, p.53). Today, the great lives of pioneers, explorers, and colonizers are not a matter of importance. They are exchanged with movie stars, sporting heroes, and globe-

trotting millionaires or to summarize it we could say the lives of great squanderers. The most notable element is that today's waste has even lost its primitive and pivotal symbolic and collective signification. Now, it has gotten the shape of a prestigious consumption or even personalized. Its purpose is to provide the needed economic impulse for mass consumption, not more (Watson, 2005, p.63).

One of the most sumptuous products in the United States is an automobile that aside its utility and performance is selected due to its role in elevating one's prestige. Automobility is one the main foci of daily and long-term waste, both in private and collective terms which has allured the majority of a postmodern society.

Not only is it so by its systematically reduced use-value, it's systematically increased prestige and fashion coefficient, and the outrageous sums invested in it, but - - without doubt much more deeply than this - - by the spectacular collective sacrifice of sheet metal, machinery and human lives in the accident. (Baudrillard, 2000, p.70).

All of us count fashion as something arbitrary and periodical which implies to the fact that it is something ephemeral and must be up to date each time necessary. In a consumer society, due to the close competition between the commodities, the fact that the consumer must benefit from the latest model and technology is quite essential, this necessity varies from the fashion and teaching methodologies to automobiles. As a matter of fact, this principle of being up-to-the-minute can adopt the appellation of recycling. In Baudrillard's words , " that is to say that, it is no longer an original, specific presence at all, standing in symbolic opposition to culture, but a simulation of the signs of nature set back in circulation - - in short, nature recycled" (2011, p.86).

*White Noise* is a 1985 novel written by American postmodern novelist, Don DeLillo. This novel is chronologically the eighth novel by Don DeLillo and is categorized in the genre of postmodern literature. Its narrative depicts the new values, moral principles and habits of a community or more specifically, a family that is flowing in the stream of postmodernist revolutionary evolutions. One of these notable postmodernist revolutionary evolutions is the stabilization of the notion of consumerism that emerged by the advent of the 20th and appearance of a middle-class family (Orr, 2003, p. 8).

### **An Analysis of Jean Baudrillard's Concept of Consumerism in Don DeLillo's *White Noise***

The story of Don DeLillo's *White Noise* takes place in a town with a tinge of rural atmosphere and follows the life

of Jack Gladney, who is the narrator of the story and throughout the novel, the professor of a college widely known as The-College-on-the-Hill. He has coined his name as the founder of a field in college called Hitler studies, despite his weakness in dominance upon the German language. Jack Gladney has married five times and now lives with his latest wife, Babette, children, and stepchildren.

The social circumstances at the back of the consumerism are something unsettling (Baudrillard, 2011, p.43). For instance, In *White Noise*, Frequently, there are cessations when Jack is narrating the story, and surprisingly, we notice a curtailed paragraph in the middle of the page we are reading and surprisingly every so often it is from the television or the radio in children's rooms that manifests the prevalence of consumerism's notions with the help of media. Occasionally, to our surprise, they are the mottos of some co-operating brand like MasterCard, Visa, and American Express (Bonca, 17). Although we are not sure that these are the stuff that Jack thinks. As far as Don DeLillo never clarified that whether these notions lodge in his contemplations or they are just some simple explanations in his neighboring world which he sees every day and thus are narrated in the third person. Originally, These mottos are appeared to be scriptural and somehow due to the kind of reverence to the concept of consumerism we can see the metamorphosis some cargo names into elegant symbols and patterns. In result, the alleged symbols will be detached from the product they have categorized and as an alternative those labels and markers wander in their heads, exploit their thoughts and mind whenever there is time for imagination. This opportunity is what we read in the story when Jack witnessed the scene that one of her daughters was muttering the name of the one the brand cars when she was asleep (Bonca, 2008, p.20).

As it was mentioned above Baudrillard believes the materialization of the triviality is the offspring of a consumer society and here Gladney's family is the representation of a consumer one. Here in the story, the most petrifying of all those attributed elements to consumerism is Dylar, the chemical drug that jack's wife devours and also evades clarifying to her husband. Dylar makes her have weaker recollection strength and amplifies her daughter's worrisome concerning her health each day that passes. It is the secret and concealed substance of Dylar that makes it more terrifying as long as Doctor Mink, who is the inventor of the drug, refuses to divulge the chemical ingredients of it. As Baudrillard regards, it is a characteristic of a community of consumers. The alleged consumers just don't delve or even search about what is lying underneath the brand new commodity that they are intended to buy or have just bought it. What matters is it is utility and accordance with the latest fashion (Baudrillard, 2011 , p.60). The kind of appellation that has been chosen for the drug, Dylar, is galvanizing as its name is both opaque and meaningless.

So it would attract consumers and diverse their imagination to expect a real miraculous savior for the suffocating fear of death. (Frow, 2007, p.31). This imagination is where the zombie consumers house their mind in their free times. That point, which makes the dissociation of product's name and its meaning more understandable, is its relativity with the dissociation of original manufactured items and their copies or fake ones. Universally, in consumer societies, copies are the favorite ones as long as they bear upon themselves the name of a fashionable or luxurious brand (Baudrillard, 2011, p.80).

We know that Jack is an academician and decides to dress formally or more suitable for a professor. He takes on an outfit and wears it with glasses in his everyday work hours. For the sake of being more special, obscure and knowledgeable in the result, he determines to grow beard and changes beginning letters of his name to close himself more and more to a respected professor. Beside triviality that marks the existence of consumer policies, it is the seclusion of essential requirements and the emergence of a queer upside down qualification assessment that determine qualified people for being elected (Frow, 2007, p.97). What is taking place in *White Noise* is the same thing. As Jack has been qualified as a prominent professor because of his distinguished and unique style and dressing but not due to his aptitude or dominance in German language and history. We are aware of the fact he could speak even a word in German until recently that he found it compulsory to be tutored. This oblivion, as Bonca mentions does not leave Jack alone as he wishes that he had worn his outfit, robes and glasses because he believes they could shield him from the disastrous reality that is taking place at the moment (Bonca, 2008, p.115). The oblivion is the same thing as Baudrillard observes as he states consumers attribute some supernatural features to their possessions and expect them to be so (Baudrillard, 2011, p.61).

If we consider a consumer society an alluring dystopia which is in fact rotting from within, it should not be surprising that we find out its inhabitants preferring inferior choices over the original ones. In the novel we read about *The Airborne Toxic Event* that released a toxic chemical cloud near Jack's home area. Most surprisingly, we come to understand that after the toxic phenomenon that contaminated the atmosphere, the nightfall appears to be more beautiful than usual. It is as if that like what we mentioned above the phony thing surpasses its original one (Orr, 2003, p.57). As we see, this inclination toward inferiority does not limit itself to a family or toward fashionable possessions. So we may consider this phenomenon as something contagious.

The media or the main means of mass communication such as television and radio are the prerequisites of the postmodern society of America and thus a consumer society. In other words, media, through creating an image or representation of the realistic world settles its

inhabitants into a simulated world which Baudrillard coined this notion as the simulacrum:

The transition from signs which dissimulate something to signs which dissimulate that there is nothing marks the decisive turning point. The first implies a theology of truth and secrecy (to which the notion of ideology still belongs). The second inaugurates an age of simulacra and simulation, in which there is no longer any God to recognize his own, nor any last judgment to separate truth from false, the real from its artificial resurrection, since everything is already dead and risen in advance. (Baudrillard, 2014, p.89).

As it was observed, consumers prefer fakes over originals or we can say copies surpass their originals rivals in the battle. Accordingly, they are addicted to means of this representation or the simulacrum of the real world which mostly can be found through television and the Gladney family has the symptoms of addiction:

"So then you cook at the rooming house," Babette said.

"My room is zoned for a hot plate. I am happy here. I read the TV listings; I read the ads in *Ufologist Today*. I want to immerse myself in American magic and dread" (DeLillo, 1985, p.20).

This merely shows that how the presence of a TV set in his room is the sole qualifier for happiness even if one is secluded from the crowd there. He prefers to be isolated with a preserved happiness but unconsciously living in a representational world or as Baudrillard coined, a simulacrum.

We see that throughout the evacuation of the infected region, the main concern of the dwellers is not the threatening toxic event or what is going to happen as the result of this riot. Astonishingly, it is the absence of mass communication and above all television that has preoccupied their thoughts. They seek their existence on the news. The fact that they are not able to watch themselves as the subjects of reports or that they even can't hear what is being reported about them is regarded something disastrous for them, even worse than the approaching coldness and starvation (Bloom, 2009, p.81). They look for the recognition of their strive on TV, as if the final acknowledgment of it something quite dependent on it. This bereavement has caused them to be vexed and even suspicious of their real world and its validity. Here we can conclude that the element of mass communications is something more realistic than their real life, which they are already living in and undeniably are cognizant of it (Bloom, 2009, p.85).

This family's ( an alleged consumerist family of

America) captivation by television and its broadcastings is reminding the kind of enthrallment we have read in some anthropological surveys about primitives and their fascination whenever or wherever they are faced with a token of their deity. They would be nailed or prostrated on the bare ground to show their sheer respect (Bloom, 2009, p.90). The same thing with some extent of intended exaggeration happens in *White Noise*, at the moment when the family watches Babette on TV, and they are mesmerized with that. This attitude gets more queer when we witness they prefer the image of Babette much more appealing on the TV screen. There is something common in all of these examples that it was observed so far, and that is the superiority of an image or copy of its real type (Frow, 2007, p.68). To be fair, we could admit their right to be abrasive about an inclination toward the real world. As we read, the real world is frightening for him without his outfit. The outfit that is the harbinger of a simulacrum of the real world for him. Babette, constantly listens to the radio and watches TV or even tries to turn them on to somehow keeps her morbid thoughts about death away. The life outside of that simulacrum seems to be horrifying that makes Jack repeat the mottos about brands of products to distract his thoughts that were dominated by terrors of the realistic life (Orr, 2003, p.180).

Baudrillard simulates the alleged consumer imprisoned physically and mentally in the norms and habits of the consumer society. This incarceration makes him infirm in determination to evade the pressures that push him to buy more and more. The imprisonment will lead to the dearth of competence to understand the boundaries between what is deduced as signifier and signified. This wave will ultimately result in a community with its members divested of individuality (Baudrillard, 2014, p.104). In *White noise*, we witness a pictorial image of a world steeped in noxious notions of consumerism. Thus triviality that renders for its inhabitants neither security, certainty nor certainty of security but instead engages them with the anxiety of immortality and calamitous maladies.

With the advent of the new century, it is revealed that terrors and menaces are not restricted to the use of mass killing weapons. What endangers the safety of our world and more specifically the public health is the approaching of a new hazard (Baudrillard, 2014, p.82).

The new danger from environment degradation is less alien than total nuclear War. We live with its damage every day. We cannot demonize an all-purpose villain like the bomb to serve as the target for our protest and frustration. The enemies are everywhere and include us, especially in our social roles as hapless, but far from innocent, consumers. The environment is the unnoticed, inescapable *white noise* that surrounds and interpenetrates human health (Baurillard, 2014, p.84).

Scientists define "*white noise*" as a type of noise that is created by including all kinds of sounds with different

ranges of frequencies in combination. Baudrillard considers a phenomenon like *white noise* like the cultural, economical, anthropological and hazards that are originated from consumer culture (Baudrillard, 2000, p.80). Therefore, Gladney family is coexisting with all these dangers and treatments simultaneously. They are living with these types of hazards every minute although they are not cognizant of them. Unsurprisingly the cause of it is themselves that have immersed themselves in the policies of the consumer society.

The Indifference of non-consumers toward the dominance of consumerism is not an appropriate way to be immune to the dangers and threats that chase the consumers. If they get ruined by the effects of consumerism they are not innocent. As Baudrillard mentions, all the members of society handle the mishaps of wrong cultural policies that are exercised in society. In other words, people, all of them are the levers (Baudrillard, 2011, p.54). The poisonous quality of postmodern society could nurture the venomous and destructive aspects of consumerism and help them to infiltrate all beings or places and declare itself as something omnipresent and inescapable (Baudrillard, 2011, p.49). This element that Baudrillard believes in is vivid in the depiction of the family, society and even personal function in Don DeLillo's *White Noise* which we observe earlier.

## CONCLUSION

In *White Noise*, Don DeLillo has mentioned the issues of addiction, pollution, endangered public health and the hazard that is threatening inhabitants. We have the tangible sketching of technologicalized society at the threshold of destruction. From its advent, technology and nature had severe conflictions. As long as technology needs to exploit nature for its existence (Baudrillard, 2011, p.101). Similarly, in *White Noise*, Don DeLillo elucidates this invasion of technology which has progressed into an essential element. This element can influence human being's lives like the influential presence of computers, radios, scanners and other electronic devices in *White Noise*, which testify the dependence of human being to them (Bloom, 2009, p.62).

They attached to me a seesaw device, turned me upside down and let me hang for sixty seconds. A printout emerged from a device nearby. They put me on a treadmill and told me to run, run. Instruments were strapped to my thighs ; electrodes planted on my chest. They inserted me in an imaging block , some kind of computerized scanner .someone sat typing at a console, transmitting a message to the machine that would make my body transparent. I heard magnetic winds, saw flashes of northern light

(DeLillo, 1985, p.31).

Undeniably the emergence, materialization, the prevalence of consumerism has affected a wide range of aspects in America's society. One of these aspects is the security and health of the unaware consumers. Moreover, as we observed earlier, commodities in American culture are not just the materials that are to be sold but are the tools for consumers to identify themselves in them. The security and health of the Americans are endangered due to their careless inclination toward the outward blessings of consumerism. The community is allured to accept that the commodities they choose to buy and consume, control their individualities. They find no other way to have their identity preserved but to purchase and circle themselves with a sea of products and put themselves to the exposure of malignant toxicity. As a result, they are imprisoned in a dungeon that is drilled with their own hands. DeLillo tangibly discloses incarceration of Gladney family and introduces it as something unrecognizable and thus they are somehow impotent to eschew from what has caused them this misfortune and are being suffered physically and mentally (Bloom, 2009, p.123).

As it was contended above, we know that the captivating power of consumerism can affect its adherents mentally and brings about significant mental nuisances. In fact, we are facing a twisted shape of schizophrenia here. One of the well-known disorders of our psyches, schizophrenia is a rational disturbance which is distinguished by unusual social conduct and also inability to distinguish what is real and what is not. What do we have here is not a link between the psychological sense of schizophrenia and consumerism. As Baudrillard and Fredric Jameson have stated, the alleged consumer in a postmodern society like America has acquired a shattered identity. The consumers are hypnotized by commercial ballyhoos that have led them to lose their association with the real world and reality (Baudrillard, 2014, p.117). In other words, they attributed to this, the impotence of postmodern man to discern the threshold of signified and signifier a schizophrenic quality. When the boundary between these two is neglected, the consumer feels the paucity of an individuality. An individuality that is the result of a definite and profane unification of the future, present and past (Baudrillard, 2014, p.117). Thus a schizophrenic consumer due to the lack of what we called identity seeks his or hers in buying and consuming commodities and totally in the gratification of desires to the extreme. So they do not have a stable identity and is dependent on the commodity they consume or are indented to.

The first feature of consumerist schizophrenia was the incapability of the consumer to distinguish the concept of signifier and the signified. This concept is reminding of the Dylar's impact, as we remember the on a trial drug that was supposed to emancipate its user from the

anxieties of the approaching death. Moreover, its side effects somehow evoked the schizophrenic symptoms such perplexing the signifier with the thing or being that it signifies (Bloom, 2009, p.83). Willie Mink, who is the supervisor of Dylar project, can be the sheer sample of a schizophrenic consumerist victim. He has spent the whole of his time watching television and is addicted in consuming Dylar and thus sees no differentiation between what we call words or language and the reality they allude. Mink is absorbed to the TV he is watching in a way that it shows he only believes on what media dictates to him. In the novel, "He hit the floor, began crawling toward the bathroom . . . Showing real terror. . . .

He tried to wriggle behind the bowl, both arms over his head, his legs tight together" (DeLillo, 1986, p.311). This shows that in a consumer society where the role of media is undeniable, Mink is hypnotized by the influence of television or media. He has lost his trust or even attention to what other people say their acceptable logic and even what he believes in his within, he rejects them all.

The figure was male, of course, and sat sprawled in the short-legged chair. He wore a Hawaiian shirt and Budweiser shorts. Plastic sandals dangled from his feet. The dumpy chair, the rumpled bed, the industrial carpet, the shabby dresser, the sad green walls and ceiling cracks. The TV is floating in the air, in a mental brace, pointing down at him. He spoke first, without taking his eyes from the flickering screen.

"Are you heartsick or soulsick?"

I stood against the door.

"You are Mink," I said (DeLillo, 1985, p.450).

In this society, where the media and the consuming policies are ruling, the reality vanishes and the real is substituted with the simulated world of media. The power of this new idol is so domineering that causes its followers to ignore their comprehensions and give this important responsibility to the media. Steffie, appreciation of radio and television is a good example of this substitution:

It is these secondary levels of life ,these extrasensory flashes and floating nuances of being ,these pockets of rapport forming unexpectedly , that made me believe we were a magic act ,adults and children together ,sharing unaccountable things .

"We have to boil our water," Steffie said.

"Why?"

"It is said on the radio."

They are always saying boil your water," Babette said. "It's the new thing, like turn your wheel in the direction of the skid ..." (DeLillo, 1985, p.48).



In fact, there is no need to boil water at all. However, as far as Steffie is one of the victims of the hypnotization of consuming society and mesmerized by the power of media, accedes to its dictation and urges the family to do so. This enslavement exactly shows their inability to the differentiation between the real world and the simulation one and they prefer to live in the ambiance of the latter. In *White Noise*, Don DeLillo expresses his concern over the weakness of the postmodern family, although he shows a faint possibility of rebellion and transgression by depicting Jack rejuvenating the moralistic virtues of humanity. By juxtaposing the refusal of Jack to kill Mink and helping him to survive, we may deduce that Don DeLillo places his hope not in the accidental collapse of the consumerism but in the potentiality of the captivated consumer to restore his or her heritage in order to acquire and keep the balance that he is beginning to be deprived of in an initial postmodern society.

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